

OKYEAME

December 21, 2006

American Embassy,
Accra



THE HISTORY OF CHRISTMAS

Each year, during the month of December, millions of homes across America are decorated with Christmas trees and fairy lights. But how much do you really know about this festive holiday? *[Read on to learn more]*

An Ancient Holiday

The middle of winter has long been a time of celebration around the world. Centuries before the arrival of the man called Jesus, early Europeans celebrated light and birth in the darkest days of winter. Many peoples rejoiced during the winter solstice, when the worst of the winter was behind them and they could look forward to longer days and extended hours of sunlight.

Irving Reinvents Christmas

It wasn't until the 19th century that Americans began to embrace Christmas. Americans re-invented Christmas, and changed it from a raucous carnival holiday into a family-centered day of peace and nostalgia. But what about the 1800s peaked American interest in the holiday? The early 19th century was a period of class conflict and turmoil. During this time, unemployment was high and gang rioting by the disenchanting classes often occurred during the Christmas season. In 1828, the New York city council instituted the city's first police force in response to a Christmas riot. This catalyzed certain members of the upper classes to begin to change the way Christmas was celebrated in America.

In 1819, best-selling author Washington Irving wrote *The Sketchbook of Geoffrey Crayon, gent.*, a series of stories about the celebration of Christmas in an English manor house. The sketches feature a squire who invited the peasants into his home for the holiday. In contrast to the problems faced in American society, the two groups mingled effortlessly. In Irving's mind, Christmas should be a peaceful, warm-hearted holiday bringing groups together across lines of wealth or social status. Irving's fictitious celebrants enjoyed "ancient customs," including the crowning of a Lord of Misrule. Irving's book, however, was not based on any holiday celebration he had attended - in fact, many historians say that Irving's account actually "invented" tradition by implying that it described the true customs of the season. ***Continues on page 3...***

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CLO Office Hours



Mon-Thurs
8am-4pm

Fri
8:00 am-12:00pm

If you have news, classified, suggestions, letters, restaurant reviews etc. for the Okyeame, please write to the Editor, **Mikelle Antoine** at:

accraokyeame@yahoo.com
Deadline Monday 5pm

Please let us know what you would like to see in the Okyeame. Your suggestions, criticism and story ideas are most welcome!

The Okyeame is published weekly by the United States Mission, Accra. It is for the use of all Mission employees and their families. Post activities and items of general interest are included in this newsletter. Please send news items, suggestions and classified ads to accraokyeame@yahoo.com. Submission deadline is COB Monday of publication week. Classified ads may be placed by members of the Mission or members of other foreign missions stationed in Ghana. Ads will be run for three weeks and can be renewed. If an item is sold before the three weeks are up, please notify accraokyeame@yahoo.com. Ads and submissions are accepted based on appropriateness and relevance to the Embassy community. Okyeame is a Twi word meaning linguist, or chief's spokesperson.



Reentry by Peg Clement

Repatriation. It sounds as if you are a dead soldier and all that's left of you are your remains. And about Day Two back in the United States, you'll most likely feel that way. Some post reports call it re-entry, as if you are now an astronaut, being hurtled, weightless and numb, through the stratosphere, slammed back into earth. Same feeling: deadness. Robin Pascoe in her book on coming home, *Homeward Bound: A Spouse's Guide to Repatriation*, compares it to the odd schitziness of wearing your contact lenses in the wrong eyes. I think it's also that feeling you have when you meet a teenage daughter of someone you know well. The facial similarities and mannerisms are eerily disconcerting, just off. From my journal, the third morning back: "Congratulations; you've survived those 45 empty rolls of thin brown strapping tape the movers left behind. The 85 goodbyes. But what are you doing coming home in the dead of winter? At Christmastime. Staying with relatives. In a small town. With a kid in tow. Without your pet in tow. With no wheels. With job insecurity. Without any NoDoz. With your house and life reduced to a single 44-pound suitcase. What were you thinking?" Now, though, with two weeks' retrospective on that hurtling, dead return, I feel I can offer other poor returning souls some advice -- starting with Maslow's hierarchy of Basic Human Needs. Shelter, oxygen, food, water, clothes, a stable body temperature, and so on up. You can get to truth, goodness, beauty, unity, transcendence, aliveness, uniqueness, perfection, justice, order and simplicity later.

LODGING

Take a hotel room, even in your hometown. An expensive hotel room, with kitchenette and cable TV. Where your kids can get their yah-yahs out by jumping on the beds. Turn the hotel's red-blinking clock toward the wall and pull those double thick drapes tightly closed. At 3 am and 4:30 am over the next few mornings, obsessing over not being able to fall back to sleep, heed this message: Sominex doesn't work. Halcion does. See your doctor. If being a houseguest is the only option, avoid at all costs staying in an environmentally correct household -- you'll need long hot showers, you'll need a clothes drier, caffeinated coffee, good wine, central heating, white sugar. You won't be able to stand the confusion of having to recycle your trash and garbage in 15 different receptacles.

SHOPPING

You'll also need immediate access to a good mall, including a decent drugstore and a good department store. You'll finally be able to get your glasses straightened correctly, and buy some much-needed Metamucil (and mitts, scarves, hats, boots, sweaters, gloves, snowpants, gooey rich cinnamon buns). And lucky you, you get to start over with brand-new spices, gin, mayo, scotch tape, toothpaste, aerosols like Pam - all the half-used things you had to leave behind at post. Strangely, for about two days of shopping, you WILL feel a salutatory effect (they call it retail therapy here) from your months of shopping deprivation. But then, you'll start noticing a lethargy creeping in. The sudden transition from so much time overseas with not enough choice to too much choice now will cause a strange retail paralysis. The red blinking lights will come on: Choice overload! Choice overload! Tiptoe gingerly out of the mall and just go sit in your bedroom, alone, for awhile.

WHEELS

Another thing: You'll need your own wheels at all costs - don't think you can borrow your brother's. Rent one. A big one. Hang the cost. You'll need to ask too many other, more important favors of people without having to beg their cars, such as "can you stop staring at me while I'm having my fourth Good Cry today?" If you are coming from an ex-British colony, tie a red ribbon to your driver's side door. On the other hand, people in grocery store parking lots don't seem to even notice how often you get back out of the passenger side and walk around to the driver's side. Remember, people are busy. Very busy. With schedules.

TIMING

Never, but never, repatriate at Christmas. You don't want to have to witness this pure, unadulterated orgy of consumption right off the bat. The proverbial fruit cakes and relatives with dangly Santa earrings and holiday sweaters may just put you over the edge.

CONVERSATIONS

Day four or five, you'll need to find someone nearby who has been outside the state recently, or preferably, a former Peace Corps volunteer, or maybe even a professor in international relations. The waitress in the Thai restaurant will do. You'll need to talk, about more than just "How was it?" *continues on page 4...*



A CHRISTMAS CAROL

Also around this time, English author Charles Dickens created the classic holiday tale, *A Christmas Carol*. The story's message—the importance of charity and good will towards all humankind—struck a powerful chord in the United States and England and showed members of Victorian society the benefits of celebrating the holiday. The family was also becoming less disciplined and more sensitive to the emotional needs of children during the early 1800s.

Christmas provided families with a day when they could lavish attention—and gifts—on their children without appearing to "spoil" them. As Americans began to embrace Christmas as a perfect family holiday, old customs were unearthed. People looked toward recent immigrants and Catholic and Episcopalian churches to see how the day should be celebrated. In the next 100 years, Americans built a Christmas tradition all their own that included pieces of many other customs, including decorating trees, sending holiday cards, and gift-giving. Although most families quickly bought into the idea that they were celebrating Christmas how it had been done for centuries, Americans had really re-invented a holiday to fill the cultural needs of a growing nation.

How It All Got Started

Long before the advent of Christianity, plants and trees that remained green all year had a special meaning for people in the winter. Just as people today decorate their homes during the festive season with pine, spruce, and fir trees, ancient peoples hung evergreen boughs over their doors and windows. In many countries it was believed that evergreens would keep away witches, ghosts, evil spirits, and illness. In the Northern hemisphere, the shortest day and longest night of the year falls on December 21 or December 22 and is called the winter solstice. Many ancient people believed that the sun was a god and that winter came every year because the sun god had become sick and weak. They celebrated the solstice because it meant that at last the sun god would begin to get well. Evergreen boughs reminded them of all the green plants that would grow again when the sun god was strong and summer would return. The ancient Egyptians worshipped a god called Ra, who had the head of a hawk and wore the sun as a blazing disk in his crown. At the solstice, when Ra began to recover from the illness, the Egyptians filled their homes with green palm rushes which symbolized for them the triumph of life over death. Early Romans marked the solstice with a feast called the Saturnalia in honor of Saturn, the god of agriculture. The Romans knew that the solstice meant that soon farms and orchards would be green and fruitful. To mark the occasion, they decorated their homes and temples with evergreen boughs. In Northern Europe the mysterious Druids, the priests of the ancient Celts, also decorated their temples with evergreen boughs as a symbol of everlasting life. The fierce Vikings in Scandinavia thought that evergreens were the special plant of the sun god, Balder. Germany is credited with starting the Christmas tree tradition as we now know it in the 16th century when devout Christians brought decorated trees into their homes. Some built Christmas pyramids of wood and decorated them with evergreens and candles if wood was scarce. It is a widely held belief that Martin Luther, the 16th-century Protestant reformer, first added lighted candles to a tree. Walking toward his home one winter evening, composing a sermon, he was awed by the brilliance of stars twinkling amidst evergreens. To recapture the scene for his family, he erected a tree in the main room and wired its branches with lighted candles. Most 19th-century Americans found Christmas trees an oddity. The first record of one being on display was in the 1830s by the German settlers of Pennsylvania, although trees had been a tradition in many German homes much earlier. The Pennsylvania German settlements had community trees as early as 1747. But, as late as the 1840s Christmas trees were seen as pagan symbols and not accepted by most Americans. It is not surprising that, like many other festive Christmas customs, the tree was adopted so late in America. To the New England Puritans, Christmas was sacred. The pilgrims's second governor, William Bradford, wrote that he tried hard to stamp out "pagan mockery" of the observance, penalizing any frivolity. The influential Oliver Cromwell preached against "the heathen traditions" of Christmas carols, decorated trees, and any joyful expression that desecrated "that sacred event." In 1659, the General Court of Massachusetts enacted a law making any observance of December 25 (other than a church service) a penal offense; people were fined for hanging decorations. That stern solemnity continued until the 19th century, when the influx of German and Irish immigrants undermined the Puritan legacy. In 1846, the popular royals, Queen Victoria and her German Prince, Albert, were sketched in the *Illustrated London News* standing with their children around a Christmas tree. Unlike the previous royal family, Victoria was very popular with her subjects, and what was done at court immediately became fashionable—not only in Britain, but with fashion-conscious East Coast American Society. The Christmas tree had arrived. *Continues on page 4...*

...*Continued from page 3.* By the 1890s Christmas ornaments were arriving from Germany and Christmas tree popularity was on the rise around the U.S. It was noted that Europeans used small trees about four feet in height, while Americans liked their Christmas trees to reach from floor to ceiling. The early 20th century saw Americans decorating their trees mainly with homemade ornaments, while the German-American sect continued to use apples, nuts, and marzipan cookies. Popcorn joined in after being dyed bright colors and interlaced with berries and nuts. Electricity brought about Christmas lights, making it possible for Christmas trees to glow for days on end. With this, Christmas trees began to appear in town squares across the country and having a Christmas tree in the home became an American tradition. **Source:** www.history.com/minisites/christmas/



...*Continued from page 2.* But be prepared to be a total turnoff. You think you are the most interesting person at the New Year's gathering -- recently returned from doing fabulously fascinating DEMOCRACY work in COLOMBIA, for heaven's sakes - but believe me, you are Spam. Soaps and the weather are better conversation items than your very wonderful expatriate life. Figure out early on what couple of comments you can make in three minutes flat -- comments that have high "impress" value -- and stick to them. People may be interested in things like 1). whether you have jet lag, 2). how many hours time difference there is, 3). what you ate "over there," and the killer, always asked by Americans: 4). what the weather is like "in Africa" (it's 55 countries, for crying out loud!). Then it's back to what the mall hours are this weekend, Jerry Springer and how much did Molly's DVD player cost. See if you can sneak in the following items into the conversation somehow before their eyes glaze over: Offer up that you have 6,212 pounds of sea freight (call it "furniture") in containers (say "on a ship"), currently "on the high seas." These words have high dramatic effect for attention-span-challenged Americans. I'm not sure they're impressed because people can move a whole household of furniture, or that it weighs so much, or that it comes over the ocean, or even that it takes two to three months, but they are definitely wowed. Also: slip in the comment, especially to women/mother friends, that you haven't cooked for two years, haven't done the laundry -- and get your kicks out of watching how fast the anti-maid hackles rise up. Note, maids just aren't good conversation items here in America. It's too exploitative to use maids, I guess (never mind that you ended up feeding 36 mouths by paying your four housestaff "over there").

If you moved a pet across the world, that, too will get good play among your friends. "\$363 for a cat???" And they always freak out when you mention the 19-hour flight from Johannesburg to Atlanta. "Nineteen HOURS? I didn't know a plane could stay in the air that long!" One last word on language. You'll need to listen for the newest cool words and phrases now in vogue. "24-7/365" seems to be the in thing now. And "giving back." Last time I re-entered, "seamless" (as in transitions, hah), "you snooze you lose" and "level playing field" were on everyone's lips, and the use of "way" as an adverb (way cool) was picking up. The unlikely phrase "da bomb" seems to have replaced "awesome" in teenspeak, along with "random" to describe cool things. You've been away a couple years; now get hip. Rock on.

JOYS

Hardships aside, think of all the splendors of returning: You now get your choice of eight different cat foods, instead of just Whiskers Tuna. And don't forget your tube of organic cat toothpaste - a crucial item you've had to do without for two whole years. And you will finally, thankfully, have access to fifteen different laundry detergents, in different sizes, strengths, colors, liquid or powder, scented or non, not just the one (Omo). Wait till you see all the variety of yogurts. Note: Yoplait Key Lime Pie Cheesecake rules (rocks?). At Taco Bell (YES! JUNK FOOD!), you'll be able to order either a taco, a quesadilla, a tortilla or a burrito (all flat round things, it seems, but never mind), with onions or no; Grande, Supreme-o, or Fiesta; hot, medium or mild; beans, no beans, or extra beans; for here or to go; a full meal or a la carte; with (thank God it's the same drinks), Fanta, Sprite, Coke or Pepsi; in a large, medium, or small cup with that quintessentially American option of bottomless refills; in paper or plastic! At least Taco Bell doesn't ask for your zip code before you order. You don't HAVE a zip code yet.

Continues on page 5...

...Continued from page 3. And by the way -- concentrate on not stuttering in a panic, not looking shell-shocked, when innocent shopkeepers or even colleagues ask for your address. This, too, shall pass, and the post office guys WILL figure out which one of your five forwarding mail addresses to use eventually. Happily, along with organic feline toothpaste, you'll be able to buy pet insurance for your repatriated dear one, and reserve a special pet grave for when it passes, and then get animal death grief counseling. Advice? Just shake your head, and shuffle on. Had you gotten sick of reading the one government daily rag at post? The Herald? The Times? Well lucky you - you will now have access to dozens of newspapers, magazines, TV shows, radio programs, web sites, newsletters, billboards, flyers, junk mail, commercials, notice boards, and all at once. But you'll quickly understand why first aid experts don't feed a starvation victim a full-course meal, or why they don't throw hypothermic victims full bore into a hot shower. Slowly, slowly. Just hope you will find more than one column inch of international news, preferably about your dearly departed country. Or that you can find something more than CNN's "Global Minute" of international news on one of the 109 TV channels. Restrain yourself on the America-bashing when you first arrive back. America does have community libraries that lend out videos and books free. Dunkin Donut bulletin boards advertising opportunities beyond a Burundian's wildest dreams -- of cheap evening computer courses, and used cars for \$2,999, and free Internet CDs. Rejoice in finally reading a Newsweek well before its cover date. In listening to Garrison Keillor on Saturday nights. Drinking water out of the tap. Being able to buy white eggs at Eastertime. Getting a bank statement on time - isn't that da bomb? People let you back out of your driveway. You can scan your own groceries at Shop and Save now, if you can figure out how. Go ahead and throw leftovers down the disposals (DISPOSALS!!) if you feel like it; don't bother ripping up your credit card statements into shreds. Enjoy the thicker texture of U.S.-made paper napkins and plastic bags. Drive around town with your windows fully open, your handbag on the seat next to you.

TECHNOLOGY

Face it: you are a dinosaur in these electronic toy times. Walking into a Radio Shack store will be an out-of-body, futuristic experience. Handsfree, headset, cordfree, free minutes, anytime minutes, cordless, headless, handless, seamless, DVD CD VHS VCR MP3 MhZ, ROM RW, roaming, digital analog G3 -- ach, it all swirls together in a miasma of technobabble. Head down; walk out.

MELTDOWNS

Finally: Keep the tissues handy. The fallout from your move comes at strange times, in odd places. On Day Four, my 10-year old daughter exploded into hot tears in the back seat, during the eight-hour drive to our final destination, after I explained to her (badly) who Albert Einstein was and a bit on his theory of whatchamacallit. (Well, she asked.) "But I have to wait eight years till I can study PHYSICS!!! Whaa-a-a-----aaaa!" Personalities can and do disintegrate. I started burbling when I went to buy tomatoes. I just wanted one ripe tomato, with no plastic sheen, and one NOT buried with three others under plastic wrap. Wait to clean your toilet bowl until some sunny morning when you feel very centered, very together. Just set small and gentle daily goals for yourself - add "breathe" and "take a shower" to your long list of things to do, so that at least you'll have something to cross off at the end of the day. And soon enough, just when you're fully repatriated, completely re-entered, you'll be getting that familiar tic back, the wanderlust tic -- probably when you are put on hold one time too many. Or when someone asks you yet again what the weather is like in Africa. It's a 24-7/365 thing, this re-entry business; it's way freaky, and yet strangely, when it starts ending, you're almost sorry to lose that certain edge, that double vision that helps you see your own country a little more clearly.

Peg Clement recently returned to the U.S. from Harare, Zimbabwe, and works as a Senior Associate at the State University of New York's International Development Group in Albany, overseeing legislative development projects in Kenya and Zimbabwe, and preparing new ones in Peru and Morocco. She reports that she has just purchased a house, and is currently walking around with sticky brown tape on the bottom of her shoes and trying to untangle hundreds of hangers while her young daughter endlessly pops sheets of bubble wrap. *Reprinted with permission from author from www.talesmag.com.*



CALCIUM!

Calcium, the most abundant mineral in the human body, has several important functions. More than 99% of total body calcium is stored in the bones and teeth where it functions to support their structure. The remaining 1% is found throughout the body in blood, muscle, and the fluid between cells. Calcium is needed for muscle contraction, blood vessel contraction and expansion, the secretion of hormones and enzymes, and sending messages through the nervous system. A constant level of calcium is maintained in body fluid and tissues so that these vital body processes function efficiently. Bone undergoes continuous remodeling, with constant resorption (breakdown of bone) and deposition of calcium into newly deposited bone (bone formation). The balance between bone resorption and deposition changes as people age. During childhood there is a higher amount of bone formation and less breakdown. In early and middle adulthood, these processes are relatively equal. In aging adults, particularly among postmenopausal women, bone breakdown exceeds its formation, resulting in bone loss, which increases the risk for osteoporosis (a disorder characterized by porous, weak bones).

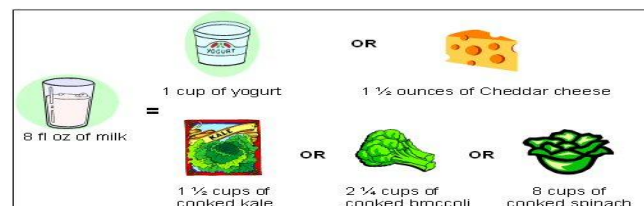
Recommended Adequate Intake by the IOM for Calcium

In the United States (U.S.), milk, yogurt and cheese are the major contributors of calcium in the typical diet. Although dairy products are the main source of calcium in the U.S. diet, other foods also contribute to overall calcium intake. Foods such as Chinese cabbage, kale and broccoli are other alternative calcium sources. In the United States (U.S.), milk, yogurt and cheese are the major contributors of calcium in the

Male and Female Age	Calcium (mg/day)	Pregnancy & Lactation
0 to 6 months	210	N/A
7 to 12 months	270	N/A
1 to 3 years	500	N/A
4 to 8 years	800	N/A
9 to 13 years	1300	N/A
14 to 18 years	1300	1300
19 to 50 years	1000	1000
51+ years	1200	N/A

typical diet. Although dairy products are the main source of calcium in the U.S. diet, other foods also contribute to overall calcium intake. Foods such as Chinese cabbage, kale and broccoli are other alternative calcium sources.

Calcium Content of 8 fl oz of Milk Compared to Other Food Sources of Calcium



Although most grains are not high in calcium (unless fortified), they do contribute calcium to the diet because they are consumed frequently. Additionally, there are several calcium-fortified food sources presently available, including fruit juices, fruit drinks, tofu and cereals. Certain plant-based foods such as some vegetables contain substances which can reduce calcium absorption. Thus, you may have to eat several servings of certain foods such as spinach to obtain the same amount of calcium in one cup of milk, which is not only calcium-rich but also contains calcium in an easily absorbable form.

The following are strategies and tips to help you meet your calcium needs each day:

- Use low fat or fat free milk instead of water in recipes such as pancakes, mashed potatoes, and instant, hot breakfast cereals.
- Blend a fruit smoothie made with low fat or fat free yogurt for a great breakfast.
- Sprinkle grated low fat or fat free cheese on salad, soup or pasta.
- Choose low fat or fat free milk instead of carbonated soft drinks.
- Serve raw fruits and vegetables with a low fat or fat free yogurt based dip.
- Create a vegetable stir-fry and toss in diced calcium-set tofu.
- Enjoy a parfait with fruit and low fat or fat free yogurt.
- Complement your diet with calcium-fortified foods such as certain cereals, orange juice and soy beverages.

AROUND TOWN

North American Women's Association (NAWA) promotes friendship among North American women, and between North American & Ghanaian women. NAWA fundraises for charitable organizations that support women and children in Ghana. Meetings are held on the **second Thursday of each month**, between September and May. Join us at **6:45pm** at the **Coconut Regency Hotel**. Look forward to meeting new friends, supporting worthy causes in Ghana and participating in cultural and social activities. The NAWA published book, *No More Worries*, can be found in stores throughout Ghana. Check the www.noworriesghana.com website or go to www.nawaghana.com. Call secretary Carol Pietryk at 0242 108273 (email: icpietryk@yahoo.ca) or president Monica Carr at 0243 680799 for further information. "You are welcome."

Ghana International Women's Club Formed in 1980 with the intention of establishing a strong bond of friendship among 'women of the world', and fostering a better understanding of one another's cultures. Members organize fundraising events and volunteer work. Monthly meetings every 2nd Wed at **Kohinoor Restaurant in Osu** at 9:30 am.

Ghana Bead Society Develop knowledge, appreciation, and interest in beads in Ghana, both from a traditional and contemporary point of view. Monthly meetings at the DuBois Center, East Cantonments; 4:30 pm, first Thursday of each month. Contact Trish Graham at 764-349 or e-mail: trish_graham@hotmail.com.

Alliance Française Provides French classes for children and adults, and hosts numerous cultural events. Located on Liberation Link Road, Airport Residential. Tel: 773-134.

American Chamber of Commerce promotes commercial, economic, educational and cultural ties between the U.S. and Ghana. Their regular luncheon meetings are on the last Wednesday of the month at La Palm from 12-2:30. Tel: 247-562, 024-251-605. E-mail: amchamgh@ghana.com; Website: www.amcham_africa.org. Located at Hse #C609/3 5th Crescent St, Asylum Down.

Scottish Country Dancing The Caledonian Society of Ghana: Scottish Country dancing is back. All are welcome to join in at the Grasscutters club, every Tuesday night from 7.30pm. For more information call 0244 069 169 or e mail caledonianghana@yahoo.co.uk
Accragio, a singing group open to expatriates and Ghanaians, is preparing its fall program and welcoming new singers. For more information, call Nate at 774-558. Rehearsals take

place every Tuesday night at 7:30 p.m. in Labone.

Energize yourself and reduce stress with **Hatha Yoga** at YMCA Mon-Wed-Friday, 5:30 pm - 7 pm. Contact Peace on 024-422-6079 or 775-348 ext. 4277.

The International Players The International Players is a local amateur dramatic group that performs publicly. Anyone interested in amateur theater is invited to participate. For information contact: Trish Graham at 764-349 or e-mail: trish_graham@hotmail.com.

Bunko is up and running here in Accra! Fast paced, easy to learn, no skill required, (**ladies only!**) dice game. We meet monthly at rotating houses. For more info or to sign up, email Kylie at edhrcir@hotmail.com.

Theater Mirrors. A local Ghanaian acting troupe, begun in 1986, whose members perform every Friday night at **Bywel Bar**, located across the street from Sotrec Grocery in Osu. Admission is free. 8 PM. The acting group is also available for private performances. Call 024-678956 for details.

Ghana National Theatre Monthly Symphony Program "Sunday at Five" held the last Sunday of every month **is now at Christ the King Parish Hall due to renovations.** Still at 5 pm, still a bargain at 20,000 cedis, 665-735 or 663-467.

Friends of Bill W. Meet Monday evenings 7-8 pm near the Cathedral in Adabraka. Contact Ludwin 020-2018540 or Lydia 024-611385.

Happy Hour Fridays at 5:30 pm an informal group meets for unwinding at the Labone Coffee Shop. All are welcome.

Hash House Harriers (Accra) The Hash House Harriers has been described as a '*drinking group with a running problem.*' However, non-drinkers and walkers are welcome. The Hash runs every Monday, with a 5:15 pm **sharp** departure. Location varies. Contact ac_crahhh@yahoo.com for details.

Hash House Harriers (Tema) is composed of Ghanaians and expats in and around the Tema area and welcome families with children. Every Thursday at 5:15 April thru October and 5:00 pm November thru March. Contact Frank Davis, at frank.davis@valcotema.com or call 020-201-1525 for information on directions to starting point.

Duplicate Bridge group meets every Tuesday night at 7:30. Any questions please contact Gerry Gray Thibodeau for information or to arrange a partner, 021-775-414. (evenings)
Pick-up Basketball Tuesday evenings (6-8 pm) at GIS. Everyone is invited to join the fun. For

additional information, please contact Ted Lawrence (tlawrence@usaid.gov) or Rob Clausen (rclausen@usaid.gov). They can also be reached by telephone at 228-440.

Pippa's Health and Fitness Center in Osu runs **Tumble Tots** on Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 9:30-11:45 am for 40,000 cedis a day. Toddlers can run around, play, and climb on the gym's tumble equipment and meet other toddlers in the area. Parents or nannies are welcome. Call 22 44 88 for more info.

Mom/Dad & Tots (3 and under) at British High Commission Grasscutters Return. Wednesdays 9:30-11:15 am.

Taekwondo at Pippa's Health and Fitness Center. Adults and kids are welcome. Learn from National Champion Master Stephen Yeboah. Call for registration: 22 44 88.

Frisky's International Film Buff Club views films Tuesdays 7pm. Call Ian at 0244 363017 or Katya at 024 329679 for directions or to receive a map by email.

Free Meditation each Wed at 6-7pm. Free pranic healing Wed. 10am-6pm. At the GMCKS Pranic Healing Center, 1st floor, Pyramid House, Ring Road central (Next to Alitalia). Website: www.pranichealing.org Phone: 0275089645 Mythili Raja Mohen

International Spouses Association of Ghana (ISAG) Are you a non-Ghanaian married to a Ghanaian? If yes, then come and meet others in a similar relationship. First Wednesday of every month at 5.30pm at Ghana International School film room. It's fellowship with some serious bits! For more information, contact Judd on 024-476-7063 or Nina on 024-477-8229 or email isag@ighmail.com

The Accra Tema Yacht Club (ATYC) is in Ada on the Volta River, 1½ hours from Accra, close to Manet Paradis Hotel. Races of catamarans and sail boats are held monthly. ATYC has 3 Lasers available for daily or hourly rental, a small bar and four chalets where members may stay overnight. **New members are welcome** as are day visitors for which a nominal daily charge is payable. Contact dmcallag@gmail.com -or- Duncan.macnicol@asc-gh.com

African American Association of Ghana (AAAG). General meetings held every third Saturday of the month. 2-4pm at the W.E.B. Dubois Center in Cantonments. For more info call 021-785438 or sankofaaaag@yahoo.com

Fit & Fun Gymnastics Club for children from 2 years and teenagers. Learn the basics of movement improve flexibility, balance and body awareness. Gymnastics helps them learn self discipline, patience and have more self confidence. Call 024 3515889 for info.

Community News and Events

AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

A Brand New American Curriculum International School

Classes since September 6, 2006—grades pre K-11th grade

Limited enrollment ~ Small teacher to student ratio

Teachers from the United States

Fully Air-Conditioned Classrooms

Bus Service Available

For More Information and Tuition Rates go to www.AISaccra.org

Or Tel: 0277-549905



Member of Network of International Christian Schools since 2006

Leaving?

Can't take that wonderful dog with you but you want it to go to a good home? I am looking for one nice adult dog whose bark is worse than its bite. One who is good with children but fiercely protective of it's environment. Prefer Alsatian but would consider other breeds as well. Please contact Laurie 0277-549905 (2)

SPECIAL SALE - AFRICAN JEWELLERY.

A group of African Jewelry Designers will be holding a sale every Friday from 8 am -11am in Airport Residential Area during one month. Please call : Tel:0242 266 713 OR 0244 372 834 (2)

Experienced Housekeeper Available- Michael has 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ years experience working as a housekeeper / gardener for U.S. Embassy families and 12 years experience as a gardener for expats prior to housekeeping. He is extremely reliable, hardworking and an excellent housekeeper. Please call Diane at 0244331244 for a reference. (1)

BusyInternet - 5 years of quality internet service in Ghana

Movies@Liquid

Beginning Friday 15th December, movie lovers get to watch the latest blockbuster movies on big screen with surround sound effects at the Liquid Bar. Recline in our love seats and enjoy your favorite drinks, grilled sausages, pop corn and so much more. The ambience and comfort of our newly furnished bar creates the right atmosphere for your weekend entertainment. Catch the fever every Friday, Saturday, and Sunday for a special treat....

Internet 4 Kids - Every Saturday 10:00am

Need a place for the kids to play at the weekend? Bring them to BusyInternet. We have a program where kids can play online with each other, surf some fun kids' sites and explore the internet supervised. Give your kids a head start in internet technology by enrolling them in our program

CLASSIFIEDS

The Okyeame is published weekly by the United States Mission, Accra. It is for the use of all Mission employees and their families. Post activities and items of general interest are included in this newsletter. Please send news items, and classified ads to accrao-kyeame@yahoo.com. **Classified ads may be placed by members of the Mission or members of other foreign missions stationed in Ghana.** Submission deadline is 5pm Monday of the publication week. Ads will run for 3 weeks and can be renewed. If an item is sold, please notify accraokyeame@yahoo.com. Send your classifieds to accraokyeame@yahoo.com.

SEEKING EMPLOYMENT

Looking for a very experienced cook/housekeeper that can make a variety of western and African meals, appetizers, and desserts, know how to serve at dinner parties, and light housekeeping. contact Monique at 0244311944 (3)

Djemela is a young lady looking for employment as a **domestic help and cook**. She is hard-working, honest and trustworthy. Call Djemela directly at 0242-929757 or for references call 0244-311256. (3)

Do you need a **reliable and trustful person** to look after your house and perform different tasks? Joseph Alou, has over 17 years experience as guard, handyman and gardener in the Embassy of Former Yugoslavia. Refs. available. Contact either Joseph Alou on 024 67 40 815 or his former employer Mr. Anjelkovich on 024 43 74 020 (3)

Driver, "Man-Friday" available. Emmanuel has worked for me for nearly three years. He is a flawless driver - has not even scratched my car in that time. He does countless other tasks and does them all well, including running errands, washing and ironing (he does this very well), and taking care of my dogs. Call 0344-311-262 or email mschulman@usaid.gov (3)

Driver available - reliable, responsible, honest and safe. Isaac has worked for us for two years and we have trusted him to drive our new baby. We are returning to Australia mid-December and are keen to find him a new position. Call Isaac on 0243 455 367 or 021 780 380 for references.(3)

Need a Turkey or several for **Christmas**? For Sale: Imported turkeys raised locally. Great quality--sold live or dressed. Location near US Embassy Annex. Contact Eddie-0244-053305 (3)

FRENCH TUITION - Qualified and experienced French teacher. From Beginners to specific French, children and adults. Send email to received complementary information to: transnet@hikyaku.com (3)

USAID/GHANA

is recruiting a Secretary to support the USAID/Ghana Contracting Office (CO). This is a full time position open to Ghanaian nationals.

Secretarial: Manages the CO, screens visitors and telephone calls and either directs them to the Supervisor or provides response to the enquiries, maintains the Supervisor's calendar, handles incoming and outgoing mail, types in final form faxes, letters, cables reports, documents etc.

- **Contract Support:** Liaising with Supervisor/Strategic Objective Team Staff, and Controller staff, maintains, generates and provides the Contracting Officer with monthly management reports, which include Procurement Plans. Assists Supervisor with back-stopping of actions including work on purchase orders, during procurement cycle.

- Assists the CO with closeouts, distribution of awards, file maintenance.

Administrative: Oversees all logistics related to CO travel, including travel authorizations, advances, vouchers, coordinates hotel and travel arrangements with travel section.

Other: Serves as back-up to the USAID Deputy Mission Director and serves as personal and confidential assistant to the USAID Mission Director when necessitated by the absence of the Director's Secretary. Maintains files for all Contract Office open acquisition and assistance instruments, general correspondence, etc.

EDUCATION: Two years post secondary school training in Secretarial, Business Studies or related field.

EXPERIENCE: At least three years of progressively responsible experience in the secretarial field is required.

SKILLS: Excellent computer skills in Microsoft Word, Excel and Powerpoint. Candidate must have excellent writing skills and ability to take initiative and work with minimum supervision.

Interested applicants should please apply to:

The Contracts Secretary Position

USAID/GHANA P.O. Box 1630 Accra.

CLOSING DATE: January 6, 2007

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MISCELLAENOUS	VEHICLES FOR SALE	
URGENT. HOUSING. Diplomats looking for a good accommodation in Airport Res., Cantonment or East Legon. No agent please. Tel: 0242 266 713 (3)	Land Rover Discovery Series II 4x4 In good condition, service history available from Mechanical Lloyd. Model: TD (Turbo-Diesel) 5 Model Year: 2001 Guards on front and rear lights Front Grill guard Extra Set - Alloy rims (4) Land Rover Fridge Transmission: Manual 5 speed gearbox. 5-seater, 5-door, Epsom Green US\$ 25,000.00 ono Contact: Mr Adekoye Ademola 233 24 286 8156 Fax: +233 21 512 981 (3)	1998 Honda Civic 4 door sedan, 61700 miles, manual transmission. Excellent condition. Duty not paid. (Estimated at 15 million cedi) Price Reduced to \$5200. Please call Diane at 0244331244. (2)
For Sale: Child Bike Seat – New Top of the Line Topeak BabySitter suspension child bike seat. \$120. Please call Diane at 0244331244. (3)		2002 Dodge Caravan , fully equipped. Please call 0244 327 424.
For sale: Like new Harvard Foosball Table for sale. Has an electronic score keeper along with manual score keeper. Has no ware marks. Paid \$500 and used rarely. Yours for \$300 or best offer. Call 774-502 and ask for Jessica. Accept cedi (3)	1996 Daewoo Nexia saloon car. Automatic, driver airbag, power steering, electric windows. Reliable, durable and good run a round car. No Duty \$4000 OBO. Please call 020 813-6962 or 0246 584 384	For Sale: DSTV box and satellite dish for 3,100,000 cedis. Call Gail at 021-773-465 or 0244311944. (2)
For Sale: Yakima bike rack that will fit any car.. The rack will hold several bikes. Yakima are the most reliable racks money can buy. Price \$200. Call Natalie at 0244-331-102 or e-mail natalie_lorence@yahoo.com	For Sale: like new 2 gigabyte sony psp memory ,three sony psp games and a movie for sale madden 06,fightnight 3,etc.\$300 negotiate-able.ll 0208804684,021912690 or email herbieokantey@yahoo.com . (2)	Volvo S40 2003 , black leather seats, AC, airbags, power steering, electric windows & doors, alarmed, fully loaded, low mileage, duty paid \$13,0000 Call 020 813-6962 or 0246 584 384
CHRISTMAS SHOPPING/GIFT GIVING MADE EASY. Looking for that special gift for that special person? We have top-of-the – line products that rival Clinique, Lancome, etc, etc., in both quality and price. We have energy drinks that taste like sodas but don't have the calories and carbs. Visit all our sites at: www.ddebrah.qbeautyzone.com ; www.ddebrah.ordermygift.com ; www.ddebrah.qhealthbeauty.com . You can also email me at deladem-debrah@bww.com . Deladem can be contacte Deladem can be contacted in the USA at 866-287-9275. (2)	Are you a quilter? Create a memory of Ghana using my adinkra symbol applique patterns to make a quilt, a wallhanging, or pillows. For pictures and price list: email Widdison@hotmail.com . Subject line: adinkra design patterns.	!GREAT FIND! Had lunch and dinner at a great new restaurant serving Caribbean dishes from many different islands. Its called The Caribbean and located in Osu! Take a right on the street before Frankie's coming from the direction of the Teteh Quarshie roundabout. It is a yellow house on the right hand side. Open Tuesdays-Saturdays, 11am-3pm for lunch and 6pm-11pm for dinner! For info: 0243-437352. It is clean and they play zouk! Oooh la lala la la!
	Famous Proverbs: Hunger is felt by a slave and hunger is felt by a king. Ghanaian	